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RHMFISS/USAFCENT SHAW AFB SC PRIORITY

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RHMCSUU/FBI WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

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RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY

RUCPDOC/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUEAWJL/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RHMFISS/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RHMFISS/CDR USSOCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY

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SUBJECT: THE NEXT 3 YEARS--AN INTERAGENCY FIELD ASSESSMENT
OF KEY TRENDS AND STRATEGIC CHALLENGES IN QATAR

REF: A. DOHA 574

[1](#)B. DOHA 558

Classified By: Amb. Joseph LeBaron, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

Introduction

-- (C) The long cable below reports the interagency consensus on nine key trends in Qatar over the next 36 months, forged in the field on September 2 during an interagency off-site led by the Ambassador at a CENTCOM Foreign Headquarters' SCIF.

-- (C) In addition to the Embassy's Country Team members, participants at the off-site included representatives from CENTCOM J5, ARCENT, and senior representatives from the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency.

-- (C) Next Steps: USG departments and agencies in Qatar will work over the coming months to systematically synchronize USG engagement here on eight issue areas:

- a) Expansion of military cooperation
- b) Further cooperation on counterterrorism
- c) Coordination on aid to struggling regional states
- d) Dialogue on Qatar's political and economic engagement with Iraq
- e) Information sharing on Iran
- f) Al Jazeera: editorial policy and broadcast operations
- g) Human Rights: Qatar's Tier 3 Trafficking in Persons ranking

h) Deepening the commercial relationship

--- (U) Specific steps on these issue areas for USG policy appear below in paragraph 10, "Imperatives for United States Policy in Qatar."

End Introduction.

POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC TRENDS

1. (U) Expected trends in Qatar's internal political situation and foreign policy over the next 36 months include:

-- (S) A continuation of a tight grip on power by the Al Thani family, which has controlled pre- and post-independent Qatar for 140 years.

-- (S/NF) Within the ruling family, a continuation of the rule of Amir Hamad bin Khalifa, who overthrew his father in 1995 and who appears/appears to be in no danger of being overthrown himself by some rival member or faction of the Al Thani family. (Note: That said, the USG has many intelligence gaps on the internal politics of the Al Thani family. There are still many known unknowns. End Note.)

-- (S) The twin roles that personality and risk play in the creation and execution of Qatar's foreign and domestic policies will continue to be dominant.

-- (S) The strategic risks to Qatar are as much to the ruling Al Thani family as they are to the State of Qatar. In fact, the distinction between the State and the Al Thanis is thin, varying, and uncertain.

-- (S) Accordingly, the foreign policy of Qatar can be considered little more than Al Thani family policy, determined by a few Al Thanis at the very top, led by the Amir, Shaykh Hamad bin Khalifa, and by Shaykh Hamad bin Jassim, who is Prime Minister and Foreign Minister.

-- (S) To put it another way, the foreign policy of this micro-state is both personality-driven and the product of an unceasing evaluation by the Al Thanis of the domestic and international risks to their family's 140-year grip on power.

-- (C) Al Jazeera television, launched more than a decade ago, put this small state on the map, and negatively so, in the eyes of regional states. The Tunisians and Saudis, as examples, reduced their diplomatic representation after unflattering reports about those states' ruling families aired on the network.

-- (C) In late 2007, Qatar moved to repair frayed relationships. As such, Saudi Arabia returned an Ambassador to Doha, and Tunisia has since re-opened its embassy. The Qataris have given some assurances on toning down negative Al Jazeera coverage, but Qatar's desire to influence events inside and outside the region is not expected to change.

-- (C) Qatar will seek to increase its influence in the region and in the world by leveraging its immense energy-based wealth. It will continue to seek to place itself in a position to act as a mediator in regional disputes, such as the deal it recently brokered with Lebanese political factions. It will do so not just for reasons of pride and ego, but in order to reduce instability in the region on the assumption that political and economic instability is especially threatening to tiny states such as Qatar.

-- (S) Accordingly, Qatar will continue to have a working relationship with Iran even while it maintains a strategic military partnership with the United States, all in an effort to mitigate the strategic risk to the Al Thani family and its control of the state and its hydrocarbon resources.

-- (C) Nothing would more please Qatar, which hosts an

Israeli trade office and has contacts with Hamas and Iran, than to play a visible role alongside us in resolving the Palestinian conflict. Qatari craves a role helping the U.S. bring about lasting peace in the region and argues that larger states, such as Saudi Arabia and Egypt, have been slow to achieve anything meaningful in partnership with us.

-- (C) Qatar's tendency to bump up against initiatives of larger states rubs many of its neighbors the wrong way, but the Amir appears sincere in wanting to promote cooperation and resolve conflicts. We expect Qatar's activities in this regard to increase as Qatar's wealth expands.

-- (C) One upward trend, from the U.S. side, is to ask Qatar for financial support for various policies and aims around the world. Unfortunately, these requests -- worthy as they are -- are made in generally piecemeal fashion, often leaving the Qataris with the impression that their bankroll is more valuable to us than their strategic partnership. Frictions in this area can be expected to build, absent high-level direct engagement with Qatar's leadership on our overall global strategy.

-- (C) On the domestic front, the Amir and a small circle of family members making all the major decisions in the country will continue their demonstrated commitment to the rule of law and to more participatory government. But they will continue to move extremely cautiously in the holding of elections.

-- (C) The pace of reform will depend on how Qatar deals with the influx of foreign workers and the societal changes caused by rapid progress.

-- (C) Qatar will continue to rely on skilled and unskilled labor from abroad. (The official population figure for Qatar is 1.5 million though the Embassy is told privately that it is closer to 1.7 million. This is an increase of more than 100% since 2004, and is due almost exclusively to the importation of foreign labor.)

-- (C) There are powerful economic incentives to paying expatriate workers low wages and providing them with few services. Influential Qataris have an economic interest in the existing system, and this will be difficult to reverse. The potential exists for tensions to erupt between Qatar and countries whose nationals work in Qatar over the mistreatment of expatriate workers in Qatar. Many of the sending countries will continue to turn a blind eye to abuses, since their economies rely heavily on remittances from foreign workers.

-- (C) The population increase will continue to place a great burden on the country's physical infrastructure, as services such as water and electricity must be expanded at a rate of 10% per year.

-- (C) The Qataris themselves will continue to experience alienation in the face of cascading change. The increase in the Qatari population has come largely from societies with different religious, linguistic, and cultural norms than Qatar. They tend to be Hindu or Buddhist, and few speak Arabic. Gross economic disparities will lead to an increase in crime.

TRENDS IN QATAR'S MILITARY

12. (S) Expected trends in Qatar's military over the next 36 months include the following:

-- (S) Qatar will continue to face a formidable challenge staffing its military, both in its senior and junior officer corps while the enlisted ranks will continue to be an attractive economic occupation for third country nationals. The Qatar Armed Forces' senior leadership is reaching retirement age and there is a shortage of mid-grade officers willing to step up to the time and energy demands placed on

senior military leaders. There is also a shortage of junior officers, as the drive to fill more private sector jobs and booming economy are providing them with economic incentives to careers outside the military.

-- (S) There will be continued growth in the number of enlisted personnel, but this growth will be among third-country nationals who have no vested interest. The preponderance of foreign nationals in the enlisted ranks will continue to be a cause for U.S. concern with the transfer of defense technologies to the Qatari Armed Forces. Qatar's ability to absorb these advanced technologies, coupled with the disclosure and access concerns of foreign nationals working on or around U.S. weapons systems, will further complicate the already confusing and cumbersome FMS process for Qatar defense weapons purchases.

-- (S) Qatar will continue to modernize its military through the purchase of U.S. weapons systems, with continued competition from French, British, Russian, and other international firms looking to gain a foothold in this expanding lucrative market. Qatar recognizes that U.S. systems are the most advanced in the world and have confidence in the battle tested performance and quality of U.S. weapons and the accompanying logistics life-cycle support. It is still attracted to French and British systems, however, due to the exigencies of the U.S. foreign military sales system. As Qatar learns the U.S. foreign military sales system, it will buy more U.S. systems.

--(S) The Qatari military works on a frugal budget, with national priority given to economic development. Although senior military leaders understand and accept the subordination of defense needs to economic development, the inability to fund force modernization adequately and rapidly causes tension between the Qatari Armed Forces Services Chiefs and the Ministry of Finance. The level of friction and frustration contributes to the desires of many senior leaders to expedite their exodus from the armed forces. This trend of fiscal frugality with regards to defense spending will continue to govern the pace of weapons system procurement and modernization.

-- (S) The Qatari leadership will seek to increase the prestige of its military within the GCC and the international arena but has no clearly defined strategy for doing so. Likewise, Qatar is attracted to the latest military systems, although its military modernization is not guided by a national security strategy. The preeminence of the Qatari Amiri Air Force currently drives modernization efforts, and confidence in the Air Force senior leader corps is evident in their designation as procurement committee chairs for weapon systems across the services. This "cart before the horse" trend of weapon system procurement driving Qatari national defense posture in lieu of national or military security strategy will continue. In many regards, the recent purchase of strategic and tactical airlift platforms is misaligned with the maritime and ballistic missile threat from Iran; however, it does align with Qatar's desire to carve out a niche in the region and on the international stage as a Human Relief and Disaster Response force.

TRENDS IN U.S.-QATAR MILITARY RELATIONS

13. (S) Expected trends in Qatar's military relationship with the U.S. over the next 36 months include the following:

-- (S) In the short term, tactical irritants will degrade a strong operational-level relationship. Our military relationship with the Qataris is plagued with irritating customs and immigration issues. The U.S. Army has considered moving elements currently in Qatar elsewhere in the region owing to the operational seaport customs difficulties. (Ambassador's Comment: What we, the USG, consider tactical and operational irritants might unfortunately be viewed by some Qataris as challenges to sovereignty -- irritants to us that rise to sovereignty challenges for them. End Comment.)

-- (S) It will remain difficult for the U.S. military to identify and meet the needs of the Qatari military because they either do not have, or have not shared with us, a coherent national security strategy.

-- (C) In the medium term, interoperability will strengthen the U.S.-Qatar military relationship. Increased foreign military sales, education, and training will professionalize the Qatari Armed Forces and strengthen our bilateral relationship.

-- (C) In the long term, the biggest impediment to engagement with Qataris will remain sensitivities about their sovereignty faced with the enduring U.S. presence. Qatar will continue to look to the U.S. military presence for protection. Qatar will wish to strengthen and deepen the relationship with increased combined planning, exercises, operations, and training along the lines of the relationship between the U.S. Forces Korea and the Republic of Korea Armed Forces.

-- (S) Qatar-U.S. relations at the political level will continue to affect the quality of our military relationship.

COUNTERTERRORISM AND COUNTERPROLIFERATION TRENDS

14. (S) Expected trends in counterterrorism and counter proliferation over the next 36 months include:

-- (S) Due to its small size and great wealth, Qatar will not be a major source of jihadists leaving to engage in terrorism.

-- (S) Qatar's citizens can, however, support terrorism financially, and the capacity of the Qataris to do so may outstrip the ability of the government to stop it.

-- (S) Qatar will continue to be an inconsistent partner in combating terrorist financing. Qatar has been reluctant to fight terrorist financing, in part because of fear of embarrassment; if it acts against terrorist financing, it would be a tacit admission that it has a problem in this regard. Qatar has also been reluctant to combat the financing of terrorist groups and activities because it does not want to invite an attack by antagonizing terrorist groups.

-- (S) The emergence of Doha as a major transportation hub for the fast-growing Qatar Airways means that more bad actors will try to transit through Doha. The Qatari authorities, wishing to protect Qatar Airways financial health, may wish to turn a blind eye to this transit instead of acting against it.

-- (S) Doha is likewise likely to emerge as a transit point for illicit technology. Those attempting to transit with illicit technology are likely to be non-Qatari, so the possibility exists that the authorities will take measures to stop it.

-- (S) The American military presence in Qatar will continue to be a target for terrorism.

LAW ENFORCEMENT TRENDS

15. (S) Expected trends in law enforcement over the next 36 month include:

-- (S) Growth and societal changes in Qatar have outpaced the ability of the government to address effectively the 21st century law enforcement challenges it faces, and this trend will likely continue.

-- (S) Like the military, the Ministry of the Interior and the Internal Security Force (a semi-autonomous paramilitary security force which augments the MOI) will continue to face

a formidable challenge in qualitatively staffing and retaining its officer corps and enlisted ranks. The Qatar MOI's senior leadership is reaching retirement age; there is a shortage of junior officers, as the drive to fill more private sector jobs and booming economy is providing them with economic incentives to leave the public safety/security services.

-- (C) Qatar's crime rate is among the lowest in the world, but there has been a 330% increase in crime across the board since 2005. This trend will continue due to the increase in the expatriate population, rapid economic development, widespread use of the internet, and the MOI's slow pace to adapt to and implement necessary institutional changes. The Qatari government will continue responding to this threat by adopting biometric technologies and information sharing with other law enforcement jurisdictions. Improving the level and timeliness of that information sharing remains a top priority for Post's law enforcement and security representatives.

-- (C) The Qatari judiciary is largely independent. Qataris, not just foreigners, are prosecuted for criminal conduct according to the same standards as expatriates. This approach represents a commitment to rule of law at the highest levels of the GOQ and will continue.

-- (S) There is a crisis in the recruitment and retention of qualified law enforcement officers. The Qatari police force is the smallest in the Gulf. If it is to meet this challenge, the force must increase officer pay and adopt an internationally accredited career professional development program.

-- (C) The reliance on expatriate labor will increase the likelihood that criminals will relocate here. Currently, all expatriates seeking residency in Qatar, to include laborers, must be fingerprinted by MOI in order to facilitate a criminal records check from their home country before residency status is granted. However, the reliability of those checks from other countries without a centralized and automated criminal justice system database is suspect.

-- (C) Rapid economic development is increasing the opportunities for money laundering and cybercrime in the country despite expanded GOQ efforts to combat it.

-- (C) The court and prison systems are overburdened and will continue to be so during the next 36 months. There is one courthouse for the entire country, located in Doha. That, combined with a limited number of judges, has resulted in a significant backlog of cases going before the judiciary. There are plans to reduce the backlog by increasing the number of judges and courthouses, which will be assigned to jurisdictions outside of Doha. In addition, Qatar is seeking Post's assistance in exploring the use of alternative sentencing methods, to include probation and work-release programs. There are also plans to reduce or eliminate the annual judicial holiday, which currently runs from June through September. Qatar only has one prison for convicted criminals, which stays at or near its maximum capacity of 560 prisoners most of the year. The only relief to overcrowding is through an annual amnesty program which releases approximately 15% of the population during Ramadan and International Human Rights Day. Plans are underway for the construction of a new and larger prison in the next three years.

ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL TRENDS

16. (S) Expected trends in economics and the environment over the next 36 month include:

-- (S) The "megatrend" driving all other economic and environmental trends, in addition to many of the other trends discussed, is the growing exploitation of hydrocarbon resources leading to rapid increase in wealth. In the next

three years, Qatar will double its output of liquefied natural gas (LNG) to 77 million tons per annum. In doing so, Qatar will run sustained major budget surpluses (USD 17 billion in 2007). Estimates by the IMF and the World Bank predict double digit economic growth until 2012. There is an estimated USD 130 billion in capital investment planned for the next seven years. Such a vast amount of money in the economy presents the risk of inflation, so Qatar will seek offshore investments to send the money out of the domestic economy, including to the U.S., via its sovereign wealth fund.

-- (S) A critical dependence on foreign labor will continue. Qatar's economy is dependent upon both managerial/technical expertise and manual labor from abroad. Although Qatar is engaging in educational reform which will fill some human resources gaps over the long-term, the ambitions of the elite for Qatar's future are greater than the capability of the local population to implement it. Calls by the country's leadership for "Qatarization" - the drive to move Qataris into managerial and technical positions in place of foreign workers, will continue publicly, while genuine implementation will fade or not be achieved.

-- (S) The financial sector will experience a qualitative and quantitative increase. The Qatar Investment Authority will play an increasing role, as financial managers seek offshore investment opportunities as a place to turn current financial surpluses into long-term benefits. Plans for a single, unified, regulator will be fulfilled. Foreign stock exchanges will help develop and expand the financial market's offerings. Insurance products will become increasingly important as a means of protecting investments. The banking sector will show increasing assets, liquidity, Islamic options, and regional expansion. There is likely to be a consolidation of local banks, and a move by the remaining banks from retail services to investment, trade finance, and wealth management.

-- (S) There will be piecemeal liberalization and diversification. For example, the telecommunications industry is gradually being opened to the private sector, and some economic decisions, such as patent and trademark regulations and standards, will be made in concert with GCC partners.

-- (S) Qatar's role as a regional and international transportation hub will grow. Doha International Airport will serve an estimated 10 million passengers in 2008. This is a fivefold increase from a decade ago. Phase One of the new airport is scheduled to open in 2010 with a passenger capacity of 24 million. Qatar Airways will increase its route network, including its U.S. destinations. There are plans for a new seaport which will increase capacity by five times in the first phase. Hotel capacity will quadruple from the current 7000 rooms by 2012.

-- (S) Qatar will continue its commitment to becoming a leader in science and technology. Relaxed investment laws will attract more foreign participation in the science and technology sectors. Internet usage has already increased to more than 300,000 users, an increase of 866% since 2000, and is expected to grow further. Qatar has the second lowest rate of "brain drain" in the world behind the U.S., according to a World Economic Forum Executive Opinion Survey.

-- (C) There will be growing concern over the environment and food safety, but pollution will continue. The newly established Ministry for the Environment exemplifies this growing concern for the environment. Energy companies in Qatar are increasingly aware of environmental challenges and will try to address them.

-- (C) The rapidly increasing population will strain public services such as water supplies, roads, and other infrastructure components. Electricity demand is expected to increase from 3419 megawatts in 2008 to over 10,000 megawatts in 2012. Water usage will grow from 150 million gallons per day in 2008 to 330 million gallons per day in 2012.

TRADE TRENDS

17. (C) Expected trends in trade, particularly with the United States, over the next 36 months include:

-- (C) Qatar will continue to seek the latest technologies. The Qatari leadership knows that its fossil fuels will run out and is determined to use its current wealth to integrate technology into its economy and society. But other than the mere desire to acquire new technologies, there does not appear to be a coherent strategy that identifies Qatar's technology needs and how to fulfill them in a systematic way.

-- (C) Qatar spends USD 180 billion combined in the following sectors: oil and gas, health and medical sanitation projects, information communication technology, aerospace, architecture construction engineering, safety and security, franchising and education/training. These huge expenditures will continue and the potential opportunities for U.S. exporters will grow.

-- (C) Qatar will seek to become a "mega-brand" by marketing itself as an international destination of "global" quality. Qatar however lacks the services and supplies to maintain its brand name. The poor quality of labor (born in part of a disenfranchised labor force) and sparseness of services may cause major bottle-necks in its infrastructure.

-- (C) Qatar's pattern of "creative destruction" will continue its growth trend, sweeping away the old and replacing infrastructure with larger and more modern versions. This will represent expanded opportunities for U.S. businesses.

-- C) Qatar recognizes that the U.S. is the world's leader in education and training, and education and training will provide enormous opportunities for the U.S.

-- (C) An informal quota system exists by which the Qataris purchase items from a variety of nations to curry favor with different firms and governments, but this is changing. The U.S. will in any event remain the top exporter to Qatar bolstered by Qatar's big ticket purchases of Boeing and Lockheed aircraft.

TRENDS IN EDUCATION AND MEDIA

18. (C) Expected trends in Qatar's society, and educational and media sectors over the next 36 months include:

-- (C) Despite an upcoming change in the U.S. administration, and regional issues such as Iraq, Iran and Palestine, trends in public opinion regarding the USG will continue to be conflicted for the next 36 months. Qatari public opinion based on time-series data from polling trends since 2002 to 2007 indicates that Qataris are split about equally on Qatar's relations with the United States: 60% of the Qataris who responded said that they were not confident about the USG's ability to address regional problems, yet 33% said that the United States is Qatar's most important ally, a number more than double the next runner-up, Saudi Arabia. More than 80% of the respondents said that they appreciated the role of the U.S. in maintaining stability, security, trade, and higher education in Qatar. Despite this, a small majority stated that they did not support the U.S. military's continued use of facilities in Qatar.

-- (C) Al Jazeera (AJ) maintains high viewership in Qatar with more than 50% of the media market share. Over the next 36 months, there will be a steady expansion of AJ in Africa and Asia, and through subsidiaries into other markets, such as Turkey. AJ will slowly but steadily lose market share within the region.

-- (C) No change in local media coverage trends is foreseen

in the next 36 months. Newspapers in Qatar, both English and Arabic, will discuss certain political and economic issues candidly but never criticize the ruling Al Thani family or foreign policy. According to several polls, about 40% of Qataris get information from newspapers and this high rate of readership is likely to continue. The presence of Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism may affect local media coverage, but primarily beyond the 36-month window.

-- (C) Government financial support and a desire to provide more Qataris with quality higher education will continue to fuel the education sector in Qatar. Education City will attract two new schools with international reputations - probably from the United States - a law school and an institution offering an MBA. The education system will continue its standardization and major reform, mostly borrowed from Western models including the United States. Stated Qatari Government policy last year was that the Ministry of Education would soon disappear and be replaced by the Supreme Education Council, but that policy has been reversed. Government schools can be expected to exercise more autonomy along the lines of the independent schools formerly administered by the Supreme Education Council, as the Ministry of Education works to establish a common core curriculum across schools in Qatar.

-- (C) Female students will continue to dominate higher education, as percentages of university-educated women continue to trend upwards and rates for men trend downwards. Almost 46% of Qatari women between the ages of 25 and 29 have acquired university level education. Amongst Qatari men within the same age group, only 26% had university education. This will remain the case as long as incentives remain the same as today, with the Government offering jobs with good benefits to Qataris whether or not they finish secondary school or pursue university studies.

-- (C) Private sector employers will continue to come up short in finding qualified Qataris to fill jobs requiring technical/vocational training. Qatar currently lacks the community college or vocational training system needed to respond to private sector needs. The Minister of Education will likely adopt the Australian technical and vocational education model and open one or more schools, but the gap between the unprepared high school graduates and employers will only begin to close toward the end of the 36-month period.

QATAR'S DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

19. (C) Expected demographic trends in Qatar over the next 36 month include:

-- (C) Qatar's population has doubled over the past five years. As many as 1.6 million of the estimated 1.7 to 1.8 million population is of foreign origin. These numbers are expected to grow among every nationality and region of origin, checked only by Qatari security concerns about certain nationalities such as Pakistanis and Iranians.

-- (C) Qataris constitute 8-12% of the population. As the foreign population grows, Qataris will become a smaller minority in their own country despite a relatively high birth rate. Qatar will not increase the size of its citizen population by easing restrictions on naturalization.

-- (C) Qataris under the age of 35 will be increasingly well educated, urban, and wealthy. They will possess an extraordinary range of opportunities distracting from the business of building their country. As their wealth increases, Qataris are having larger families, increasing the chances that the Qatari population will become increasingly younger.

-- (C) South Asians from India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh,

and Pakistan account for an estimated 800,000 to 900,000 of the expatriate population and work in a variety of sectors, including construction, import/export, labor, business, and information technology.

-- (C) Several Arab countries' nationals have a major presence in Qatar, including Egypt, Palestine (typically long-term residents), Yemen, Jordan, Lebanon, Sudan, and Syria. Expatriate Arabs constitute an estimate 300,000 to 400,000 of the population. They tend to work in engineering, accounting, import/export, education, energy, services, hotels, and beauty.

-- (C) An estimated 200,000 East Asians live in Qatar. They are mainly from the Philippines, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, and China. East Asians are prominent in the fields of mechanical technology, energy, construction, engineering, housekeeping, and labor.

-- (C) There are an estimated 10,000 to 20,000 Iranians living in Qatar. Many Iranians in Qatar are long-term residents. The Qatari Shia population is estimated at 10 percent of the Qatari national population. Qatari women marry Iranian men, a rare instance of a female Qatari marrying a foreign husband.

-- (S) There are as many as 40,000 Africans living in Qatar. They come from Kenya, Nigeria, Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and South Africa. African expatriates work mainly in construction, labor, trade, import/export, energy, and oil services.

-- (S) Europeans account for an estimated 20,000 to 25,000 of the expatriate population. They are generally citizens of the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Spain, and Turkey. Europeans work in energy, shipping, engineering, construction, management, education, finance, and investment.

-- (S) There are an estimated 5,000 to 12,000 expatriates from North and South America (excluding the U.S.) residing in Qatar. They are mainly from Canada, Brazil, Venezuela, Mexico, and Colombia. These individuals work in energy, oilfield services, education, and for Qatar Airways.

-- (S) There are approximately 8,000 American citizens registered with the U.S. Embassy in Doha, compared with only 1,500 in 2000. Over 170,000 U.S. citizens transited through Doha in 2007, and this figure will grow as Qatar's airport expands and its national airline grows. At any given time, the Embassy estimates that there are approximately 15,000 American citizens present in Qatar. American citizens are prominent in the energy industry, working for ExxonMobil, Conoco Phillips, Occidental, Chevron, and various energy services companies. American citizens also work for military contractors, the U.S. universities at Education City, the American School of Doha, and a wide range of educational institutions in Qatar. Continued growth in the education and energy sectors will bring in more American citizens over the next three years.

IMPERATIVES FOR UNITED STATES POLICY IN QATAR

¶10. (S) Emerging from these trends are certain imperatives for the United States in Qatar. We identify below areas where U.S. policy should be focused and where we will synchronize interagency efforts for maximum effect. (Note: These issue areas, including Qatar's regional foreign policies, will be examined in additional off-sites, as noted above. End Note.)

Qatar's National Security and Defense Strategy

-- (S) The U.S. should work with Qatar to help it produce an overarching national security strategy, guiding its military development, defense purchases, cooperation with the U.S. and other allies. Future off-sites will address how to bring

this about across the Qatari interagency.

-- (S) While the strategic military relationship with Qatar is sound, there are "irritants" at the operational and tactical level, principally with customs and immigration regulations and procedures. We will address these in a follow-on off-site between the Embassy and CENTCOM.

Regional Aid and Foreign Policy

-- (S) We will engage with the GOQ on aid to struggling governments such as the PA, Lebanon, and Afghanistan. On Iraq, we will establish a high-level dialogue on Qatar's diplomatic representation in Baghdad, general engagement at the ministerial level with Iraq's government, and forgiveness of Iraqi debt.

Terrorist Finance

-- (S) The intelligence on Qatar's official support for terrorists, particularly Hamas, is inconclusive, with divisions on this issue even within the U.S. intelligence community. We need a more accurate picture of the role of the Qatari Government and its citizens in financing terrorism, especially funds directed towards Hamas. This is a critical piece of the bilateral relationship that stands in the way of greater cooperation on the political level. We also need more cooperation on terrorist finance, more information sharing, more access to suspects of concern, and more coordinated effort to disrupt AQ-related funding and logistical activities in and through Qatar.

-- (S) There are policy and attitudinal differences between the U.S. and Qatar over terrorism. For example, Hamas is viewed very differently than Al-Qaida and its ilk. Qatar's Central Bank currently cooperates on a range of anti-terrorist finance efforts. We need to expand that cooperation. Qatar has an agency charged with regulating foreign charitable contributions by its citizens. We need to deepen our relationship with it. As Qatar's financial sector expands, and the country's wealth grows, so too will the potential for Qatar to be a source of money from private Qatar citizens to terrorist groups. Investing time and effort at the front end of this trend will pay high dividends later.

Al Jazeera

-- (S) We need to address al-Jazeera's intentionally anti-US editorial policies and broadcasts. We need to get al-Jazeera to help the War on Terror by giving more broadcast time to credible voices that discredit the AQ program and ideology. There should be less aggrandizement of those who preach hatred of the United States and who espouse violent extremism.

-- (S) The USG has a strong interest in using Al Jazeera to reach its enormous Arabic-speaking audience. Our objective is three-fold: ensuring that U.S. officials appear on its broadcasts; increasing its professionalism; and mitigating its most egregious editorial practices. To this end, we need to fully coordinate public affairs efforts throughout the Region to engage Al Jazeera and refute its unsubstantiated claims through a rapid response unit. More polling data are needed to evaluate better whether our use of Al Jazeera and other Arabic-language media is having the desired impact. Hence, we need to increase our polling of Al Jazeera's audience. In the longer run, Northwestern University School of Journalism campus in Qatar can act as resource and help professionalize Al Jazeera's staff. We will devote time and resources to help Northwestern establish a strong and lasting working relationship with al-Jazeera.

Iran

-- (S) Qatar shares its natural gas resources with Iran, so it will be loathe to allow its relationship with Tehran to become overtly antagonistic even though most Qataris appear to fear and distrust Iran. The U.S. military presence here

is evidence of the latter. There nevertheless continues to be considerable regional distrust of Qatar's position on Iran. We will engage the Qatari Government and people to ensure that Qatar understands the threat posed by Iran and works with us openly and cooperatively in addressing that threat. We will work to heighten Qatari leadership's awareness of and concern about Iranian state sponsorship through the Quds Force and through the use of Hizballah as a proxy.

Trafficking in Persons

-- (S) TIP remains one of the most persistent social ills in Qatar and a major area where the bilateral relationship can founder. A major U.S. imperative in Qatar is to raise awareness on TIP, and human rights issues generally, and to find ways to affect public attitudes and government policies. We have begun to set up a closer working relationship on TIP issues with the Qatar government and look to strengthen it further. Our goal: to set up an effective Embassy-GOQ mechanism to actively address Qatar's TIP Tier 3 Rating.

Taking Advantage of the U.S. Universities in Qatar

-- (S) The presence of major U.S. universities in Qatar presents unusual opportunities to foster engagement with Qatar, not only on education, but on a whole range of issues including scientific research, national security, medical research, and law enforcement. We will work to foster that engagement, and by doing so will earn the gratitude of ordinary Qataris, which we expect will have a positive effect in other policy areas.

Deepening the Commercial Relationship

-- (SBU) We intend to take an already substantial U.S.-Qatar commercial relationship to the next level. As a next step, we are working with the beleaguered American Business Council in country and leadership at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in Washington to establish a chapter of the American Chamber of Commerce in Doha.

-- (SBU) The new entity would heighten the visibility of the U.S. commercial presence and serve as a clearing house for the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) on the full range of resident U.S. company interests. This will complement our current engagement with the Qataris' expressed interest in negotiating a Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT).
LeBaron